

benefit other border states, such as Alaska, Washington, Montana, North Dakota, and Maine. In addition, we have included S. 900, Senator MCCAIN's Television Information Enhancement for the visually impaired act which Senator INOUE and I cosponsored, along with Senator SMITH. That bill authorizes an existing FCC rule requiring TV stations to offer some video description of television shows so blind listeners will be able to follow the action. The existing rule was struck down by the courts on the grounds that the FCC lacked authority for such a rule. Today we provide them the authority they need. As the son of a father who was blind for a period of time, this is an issue of personal interest to me.

Last, but most important to me is universal service reform. Our measure is based on a series of bills. The contribution mechanism we adopted is based on S. 2256, the Burns USF bill and S. 1583, the Smith-Dorgan measure which was also cosponsored by Senator PRYOR. It allows the FCC to adopt a contribution mechanism based on revenues, numbers, or connections. Such a step is needed to stabilize this important program. It also includes Senator SMITH's concept of a separate broadband fund to address the needs of unserved areas.

We have included S. 241, the Snowe-Rockefeller ADA exemption after failing in our efforts to work out this issue with the Administration. While the Burns and Smith-Dorgan-Pryor bills were the basis for our USF title, we also used important concepts from H.R. 5072, the Terry-Boucher bill, and we applaud them for their leadership in the House and thank them for their contribution to this effort. Lastly, we have included S. 2378, the Inouye measure that will improve the e-rate program for Native Americans. Senators MCCAIN, DORGAN, and I joined in cosponsoring that bill.

This bill includes provisions throughout that will benefit consumers. It encourages competition and cost savings in the video market. It addresses some critical needs in rural America. And, it encourages deployment of broadband so that our Nation can remain competitive.

This is a comprehensive bill, as indicated by my comments, that we have researched. The bill is introduced by every Member of the Senate. We are attempting to collate them so we can have one communications act for this year. This will be the Communications Act of 2006.

I urge the Senate to review it. We look forward to having their comments.

Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, today, I have agreed to cosponsor telecommunications legislation introduced by Senator STEVENS. I do so in a spirit of bipartisanship because I believe that bipartisanship will be required if we are to successfully update our Nation's communications laws. My cosponsor-

ship, however, is not a demonstration of support for the bill itself.

This is the draft of the majority staff, and I have numerous, substantive objections to the bill in its current form. Given that my colleagues and I have not yet had an opportunity to weigh in on this critical legislation, I consider its introduction the very beginning of the legislative process.

Now that the majority staff's draft is no longer a secret, we can begin a full review of the bill and address the many issues important to me and my colleagues. At first glance, some provisions will need to be deleted or changed substantially and some issues still need to be addressed.

For example, we cannot ignore concerns about the potential for discrimination by network operators, but the draft appears to do just that by failing to create enforceable protections that will ensure network neutrality. Similarly, I believe that the provisions addressing video franchise reform must follow more closely the principles Senator BURNS and I offered earlier this year. At a time of increasing consolidation in the communications industry, it is essential that we guarantee rights of interconnection, promote competition, and restrain anticompetitive behavior, particularly in markets where the Bell Companies continue to have significant market power. The legislation must promote the availability of affordable, broadband services and extend consumer protections on a competitively neutral basis.

Again, I recognize and honor the chairman's prerogative to set this legislative process into motion. The chairman is aware of my many concerns and has assured me that this will be a bipartisan process, and the Democrats will be at the table. I look forward to our discussions, and I am hopeful that we can develop a final product that everyone on our committee can support.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 456—EX-PRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE ON THE DISCUSSION BY THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL OF SECURE, SUSTAINABLE, AND RELIABLE SOURCES OF ENERGY

Mr. LUGAR submitted the following resolution, which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 456

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the President should place on the agenda for discussion at the North Atlantic Council, as soon as practicable, the merits of establishing a policy and strategy for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to promote the security of members of the Organization through the development of secure, sustainable, and reliable sources of energy; and

(2) the President should submit to Congress a report that sets forth—

(A) the actions the United States has taken to place the matter referred to in

paragraph (1) on the agenda for discussion at the North Atlantic Council;

(B) the position of the United States on the matter, as communicated to the North Atlantic Council by the representatives of the United States to the Council;

(C) a summary of the debate on the matter at the North Atlantic Council, including any decision that has been reached with respect to the matter by the Council; and

(D) a strategy for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to develop secure, sustainable, and reliable sources of energy, including contingency plans if current energy resources are put at risk.

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I rise today to submit a resolution that calls upon the United States to lead the discussion at NATO headquarters of the role the alliance could play in energy security. It further calls upon the President to submit to Congress a report that details "a strategy for NATO to develop secure, sustainable, and reliable sources of energy, including contingency plans if current energy resources are put at risk."

NATO is now facing new challenges and new priorities. To be fully relevant to the security and well-being of the people of its member nations, NATO must think and act globally.

International developments are calling attention to the growing importance of energy security for NATO member countries and other non-member partners. Dependence on imports of oil and natural gas from limited numbers of countries with state-controlled reserves makes NATO member countries vulnerable to political manipulation of supply. On a global scale, increased competition for finite supplies of oil and gas could lead to conflict that would directly involve NATO member states. This is why the resolution urges that the United States energy security message to NATO members include attention toward sustainable fuels and preparedness for supply disruption.

As the alliance focuses on a clearer definition of its purpose in the 21st century, I believe that it is important to show congressional support for NATO playing a role in energy security.

SENATE RESOLUTION 457—EX-PRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAVE SERIOUS CONCERNS REGARDING THE RELEASE OF CONVICTED TERRORIST AND MURDERER MOHAMMAD ALI HAMMADI BY THE GOVERNMENT OF GERMANY

Mr. VITTER (for himself, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. DEMINT, Mr. CRAIG, and Mr. ISAKSON) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 457

Whereas, although the Government of Germany has been a significant partner in combating international terrorism, their release of Mohammad Ali Hammadi was a grave and unfortunate mistake;

Whereas, in 1985, Mr. Hammadi, along with Hasan Izz-Al-Din, Ali Atwa, and Imad Fayez Mugniyah, hijacked Trans World Airlines Flight 847, and subsequently escaped from the scene of the hijacking;

Whereas United States Navy Petty Officer Robert Dean Stethem was singled out during the hijacking of Trans World Airlines Flight 847 because he was a serviceman of the United States, savagely beaten before being executed, and dumped on the tarmac of Beirut International Airport;

Whereas Petty Officer Stethem was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star and Purple Heart and buried at Arlington National Cemetery;

Whereas, in 1987, Mr. Hammadi was arrested at Frankfurt Airport while carrying liquid explosives in his luggage;

Whereas, in 1989, Mr. Hammadi, a Shiite militant from Lebanon, was convicted in a court in Germany for the brutal killing of Petty Officer Stethem and was sentenced to life in prison in Germany;

Whereas, after less than 19 years behind bars Mr. Hammadi was released in December 2005 and flown to Lebanon by the Government of Germany even though the United States does not have an extradition treaty with the Government of Lebanon; and

Whereas the release of Mr. Hammadi came in the face of strong opposition from the United States Government, and Petty Officer Stethem's parents were not even informed in advance that the killer of their son was to be released; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the unfortunate actions of the Government of Germany with respect to Mohammad Ali Hammadi have undermined the joint efforts by the United States Government and the Government of Germany to effectively combat international terrorism;

(2) the early release of Mr. Hammadi sends a signal of weakness to terrorist groups such as Hezbollah and could increase the likelihood of further terrorist attacks against the citizens of Europe and the rest of the world;

(3) the United States Government should continue to call on the Government of Lebanon to hand over Mr. Hammadi and other known terrorists so that they may face trial in the United States;

(4) the United States Government should take all appropriate steps to secure the arrest of Mr. Hammadi and his fellow hijackers and their transfer to the United States for trial; and

(5) the murderers of United States Navy Petty Officer Robert Dean Stethem must be brought to justice, and a clear message must be sent to the international community that the brutal murder of service members or civilians of the United States will neither be tolerated nor forgiven.

SENATE RESOLUTION 458—AFFIRMING THAT STATEMENTS OF NATIONAL UNITY, INCLUDING THE NATIONAL ANTHEM, SHOULD BE RECITED OR SUNG IN ENGLISH

Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mr. FRIST, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. BUNNING, Mr. SANTORUM, and Mr. TALENT) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 458

Whereas Francis Scott Key wrote the words of the Star-Spangled Banner in English in 1814, inspired by the sight of the American flag still waving at Fort McHenry

after 25 hours of continual bombardment by British forces;

Whereas Congress declared the Star-Spangled Banner the National Anthem of the United States in 1931 (section 301 of title 3, United States Code);

Whereas the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States, written in English, was first specified in law by Congress in 1942 (section 4 of title 4, United States Code);

Whereas the Oath of Allegiance, to which lawful permanent residents swear upon becoming citizens of the United States (as required under section 337 of the Immigration and Naturalization Act (8 U.S.C. 1448)), is based, in part, on language originally written in English by General George Washington and sworn by him and his general officers at Valley Forge in 1778;

Whereas the vast majority of Americans are immigrants or the descendants of immigrants, proud of their ancestral country, but prouder still to be American;

Whereas millions of Americans speak or study additional languages, but English is their common language;

Whereas the original national motto of the United States, "E Pluribus Unum", meaning "from many, one", signifies the coming together of people from many foreign countries to form one Nation, was incorporated into the Great Seal of the United States in 1776, is printed on currency of the United States, and inscribed on the wall of the Senate chamber;

Whereas the people of the United States are united not by race, ancestry, or origin, but by a common language, English, and by common belief in the principles prescribed in the founding documents of the Nation, especially the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution; and

Whereas, to become citizens of the United States, under the sections 312 and 337 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1423 and 1448), lawful permanent residents of the United States who have immigrated from foreign countries must, among other requirements, renounce allegiance to the government of their country of origin, swear allegiance to the laws and Constitution of the United States, and demonstrate an understanding of the English language: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate affirms that statements or songs that symbolize the unity of the Nation, including the National Anthem, the Oath of Allegiance sworn by new United States citizens, and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States, should be recited or sung in English, the common language of the United States.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 90—ACKNOWLEDGING AFRICAN DESCENDANTS OF THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE IN ALL OF THE AMERICAS WITH AN EMPHASIS ON DESCENDANTS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, RECOGNIZING THE INJUSTICES SUFFERED BY THESE AFRICAN DESCENDANTS, AND RECOMMENDING THAT THE UNITED STATES AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WORK TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION OF AFRO-DESCENDANT COMMUNITIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Mr. DODD submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. CON. RES. 90

Whereas we must remember that African-Americans are not the only survivors of the transatlantic slave trade;

Whereas like the United States, many European nations benefitted greatly from the colonization of Latin America and the Caribbean and their participation in the slave trade;

Whereas the story of African descendants in all of the Americas remains untold, leading them to be forgotten, made invisible, and allowed to suffer unjustly;

Whereas it is important to acknowledge that as a result of the slave trade and immigration, approximately 80,000,000 to 150,000,000 persons of African descent live in Latin America and the Caribbean, making them the largest population of persons of African descent outside of Africa;

Whereas Afro-descendants are present in most Latin American countries, including Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela;

Whereas the size of Afro-descendant populations varies in range from less than 1 percent in some countries to as much as 30 percent in Colombia and 46 percent in Brazil and make up the majority in some Spanish speaking Caribbean nations, such as Cuba and the Dominican Republic;

Whereas Afro-descendant populations have made significant economic, social, and cultural contributions to their countries and the Western Hemisphere from their unfortunate involvement in the transatlantic slave trade to their recent contributions to trade, tourism, and other industries;

Whereas although persons of African descent have made significant achievements in education, employment, economic, political, and social spheres in some countries, the vast majority are marginalized—living in impoverished communities where they are excluded from centers of education, government, and basic human rights based upon the color of their skin and ancestry;

Whereas Afro-descendants have shorter life expectancies, higher rates of infant mortality, higher incidences of HIV/AIDS, higher rates of illiteracy, and lower incomes than do other populations;

Whereas Afro-descendants encounter problems of access to healthcare, basic education, potable water, housing, land titles, credit, equal justice and representation under the law, political representation, and other economic, political, health, and basic human rights; and

Whereas skin color and ancestry have led African-Americans in the United States and African descendants in Latin America and the Caribbean to share similar injustices, leading to economic, social, health, and political inequalities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) recognizes and honors African descendants in the Americas for their contributions to the economic, social, and cultural fabric of the countries in the Americas, particularly in Latin American and Caribbean societies;

(2) recognizes that as a result of their skin color and ancestry, African descendants in the Americas have wrongfully experienced economic, social, and political injustices;

(3) urges the President to take appropriate measures to encourage the celebration and remembrance of the achievements of African descendants in the Americas and to resolve injustices suffered by African descendants in the Americas;

(4) encourages the United States and the international community to work to ensure